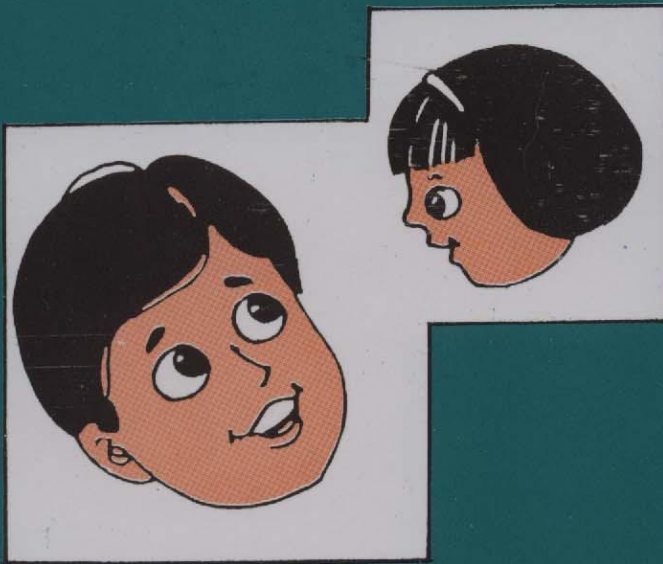


Teaching Basic Social Skills



To greet and bid farewell

To use language courtesies

To share materials and take turns

To ask permission to use belongings of others

To help 'you' in daily chores

To engage in positive relationship with the other sex

Teaching Basic Social Skills

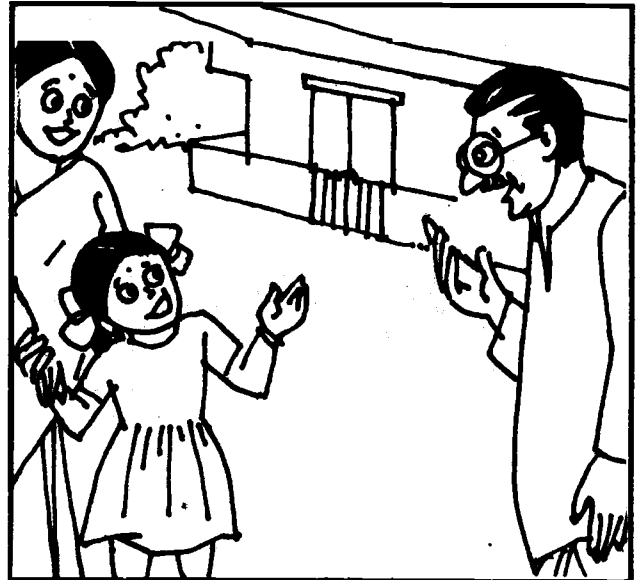
Towards independence series - 9

(Funded by UNICEF)

National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped

(Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India)
Manovikas Nagar, Bowenpally,
Secunderabad 500 011

Any act that enables a person to interact effectively with others in the home, school and community, without drawing undue attention, is considered as "***Socially appropriate***".



EVERY ACTIVITY WE PERFORM HAS A SOCIAL ELEMENT.

Let us view the fact in the context of a mentally retarded child.
A few examples are

Social behaviour	Activity
Look at people when talking / listening	Maintain eye contact
Maintain good posture	Sit / stand
Maintain good physical appearance	Dress, groom
Attend a dinner	Feed self
Maintain body hygiene	Bathe, brush
Play	Perform gross motor and fine motor skills
Greet others	Speak / gesture

Thus, we see that 'social element' plays an important role in one's life, be he/she mentally retarded or not.

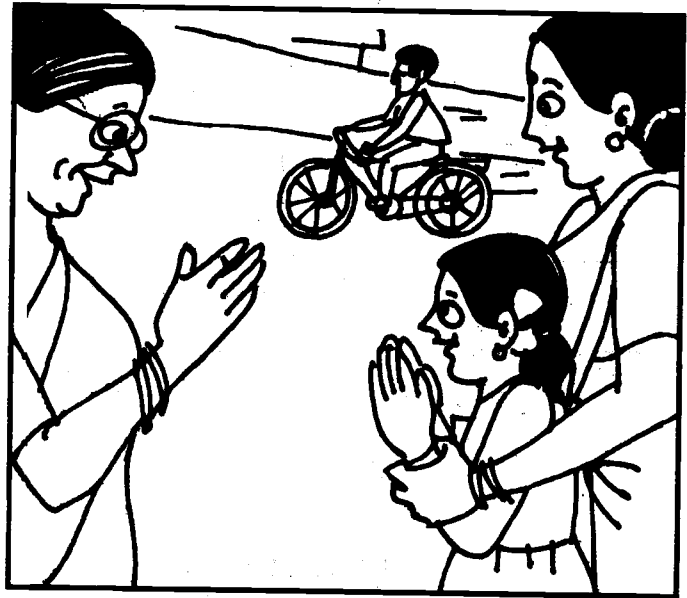
***In this booklet, the training aspects of
basic social skills have been highlighted.***

- * Instruct the child that when she sees a familiar person, she should greet the person by saying "*namaste / salam / hello*" and so on.

Also tell her that she should say "*bye-bye*" when the person is leaving the place.

- * Let the child see when you greet familiar persons.

- * Encourage the child to greet by holding her hands and helping her do the appropriate gesture.



- * When you know that a person familiar to the child is going to arrive, remind the child of what she should do on that person's arrival.

Give clues to the child by saying-

" Look! Uncle has come !
What should you say to him now?"



"Look ! Uncle is leaving!
What should you say to him now ?"

To greet and bid farewell

- * During every day conversations with the child and other family members, say "please", "thank you", "excuse me" and "sorry" at appropriate times.
- * Use the words when you want the child to do something for you.

- * Direct the child's attention to these words, when others use them.



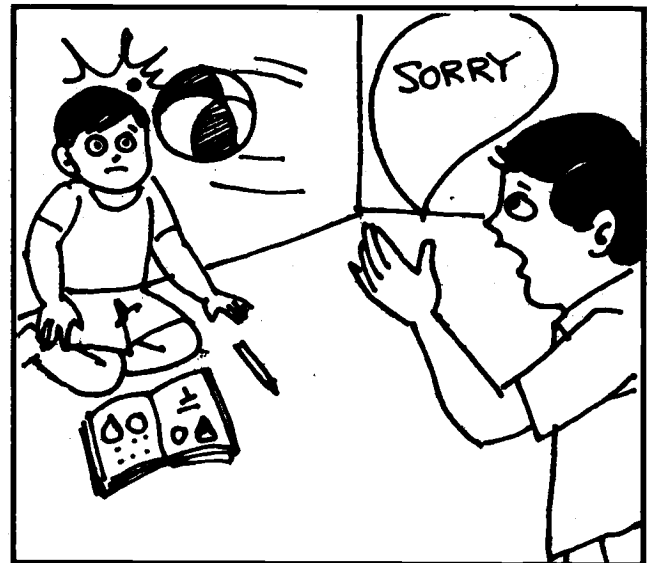
- * Encourage the child to say "please" when she wants your help, for example, in opening a door, and "thank you", when you open the door for her.

At first, prompt by saying the entire statement "say thank you". Gradually reduce your help, by giving him a clue - "what should you say now?"



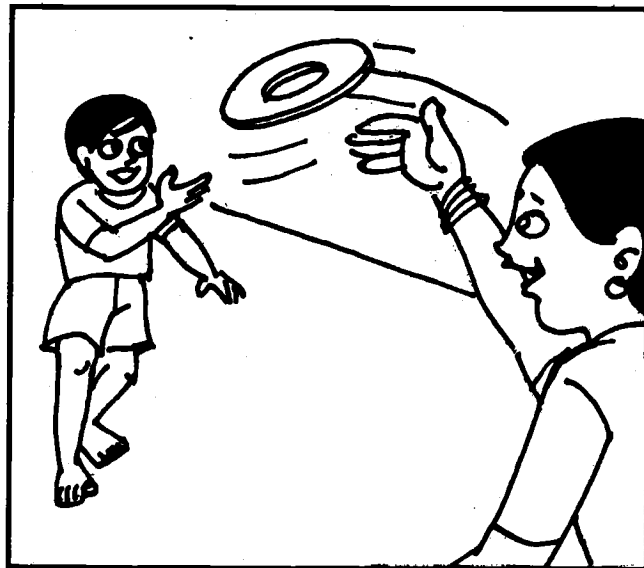
- * Show him how to move in crowded places by saying "excuse me" when people are blocking the way.

- * If he hurts someone, insist on gesturing / saying "sorry".
- * If you hurt the child or if you fail to keep up a promise for the child don't forget to say "sorry".



Be consistent in giving him instruction

- * Teach the child the aspect of "sharing" by encouraging the child's brothers and sisters to share play material with him.



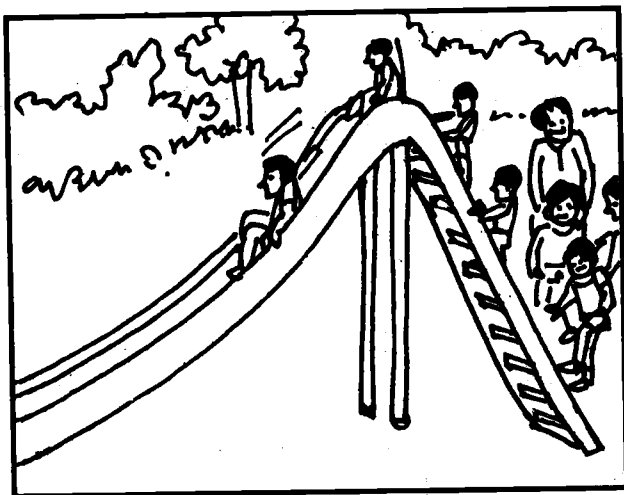
- * Arrange play activities with other children of about the same age.

Gather children at one place. Instruct them that you will call each child's name by turns, and whoever is called will have to say a rhyme, sing, dance, mime. . . .

By this, the child is also encouraged to take part in a group!

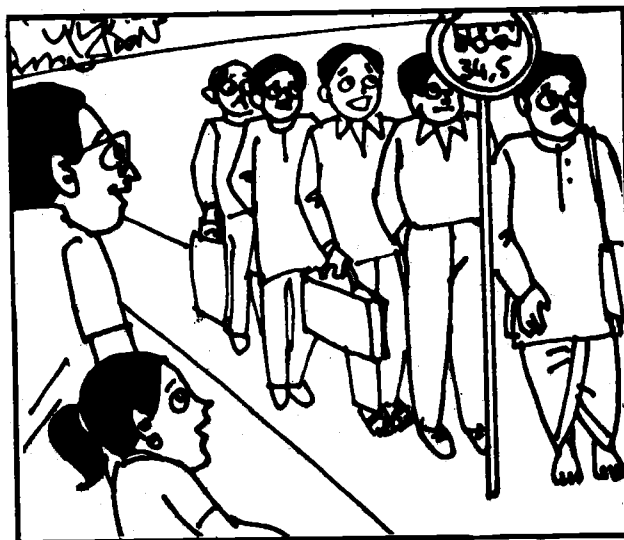
- * When you go out, bring some eatables. Give them to the child and ask him to share with other family members.

- * During meal time, make him sit with other family members and wait for his turn to be served. PRAISE HIM FOR WAITING.



- * When you take the child to a park, sensitize him to the aspect of "waiting for turns."

- * When you go out, draw the child's attention to people waiting in queues for their turns, at the bus stop, bank, post office . . . and so on.



*A lot of learning takes place by observation !
Hence, make sure that you first conform to all the
things that you expect your child to learn !*

To share materials and take turns

- * When the child is playing with his toy, ask him if you could play with it for sometime. Promise him that you would return it. Play with it for a short time and give it back to him. *Praise him for sharing.*



Gradually, develop the habit of "asking permission"

when he wants to take something from others



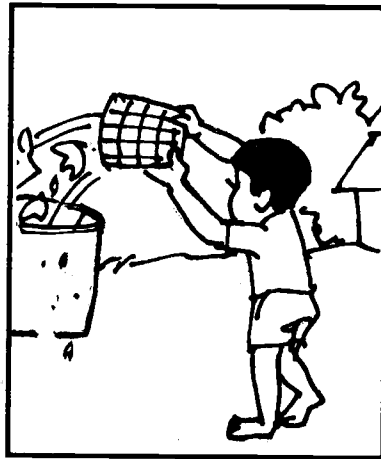
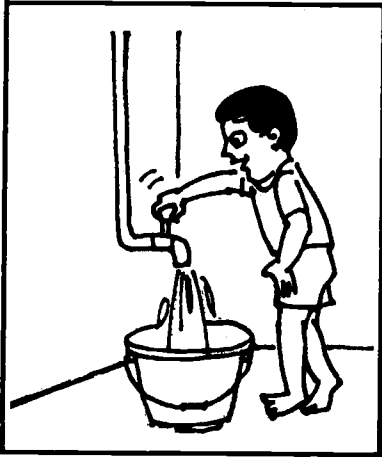
- * Suppose the child wants to play with a doll that her brother/sister is already playing with Instruct the child to request for it. Encourage her to use "*please*" and "*thank you*" and also to return the doll after she has finished playing with it.

- * In daily routine, if the child wants to take any thing from others, for e.g., a pencil, a picture book, food item, so on..., let him ask for it, thank and return it after careful use, depending on the article taken.



***As far as possible advise him
not to borrow from others.
You be a GOOD MODEL !***

To ask permission to use belongings of others



Involve the child as much as possible in all household activities.

Though you could do faster, it is worth giving your child a chance, as these activities form foundation for independent living.

Be flexible

Initially, don't be too fussy about the child's standard of work.

Instead, ***appreciate the efforts of the child for doing the task.*** Gradually the child will learn to do it better.



***Allow the child to do as much as he/she can do.
Assist only when the child tends to fail in his
repeated attempts.***

Some of the daily chores where mentally retarded individuals can be of help
bringing water from the tap to fill tubs
brooming, mopping, dusting, cleaning utensils
throwing trash / vegetable peels
putting away utensils to wash
washing, drying and folding clothes
watering plants

and so on

To help 'you' in daily chores

Under guidance allow the mentally retarded individual to interact with people of the same and opposite sex.

Instruct him/her to keep appropriate physical distance when talking to others.



Give him opportunities, in many different situations, to interact with people of opposite sex.



Allow him to talk to them, go to their house and so on.

Practically orient the child to social etiquette and manners, by involving him in weddings, parties, religious events and outings.



Discuss the kind of behaviour expected of him in a given situation, before involving him.

BE A GOOD MODEL FOR THE CHILD

Reward 'good behaviour' consistently

Rewards can be words of praise, a hug, or a special privilege. Examples: Giving him a chance to play with his favourite toy, taking him for an outing and so on. . .

To engage in positive relationship with the other sex

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